

By  
**Will Eisner**

ONE NIGHT, A GLOVED HAND  
SOFTLY OPENS THE WINDOW  
OF THE COMMISSIONER'S  
PRIVATE OFFICE.

AND THE TALL, ATHLETIC  
FIGURE OF **THE SPIRIT**  
CALMLY STEPS INTO  
THE HALF LIGHT.

KNOWN ONLY TO  
COMMISSIONER DOLAN,  
**THE SPIRIT**, IN REALITY  
DENNY COLT, WHO ONCE WAS  
ERRONEOUSLY BURIED IN WILD-  
WOOD CEMETERY, NOW USES HIS  
TOMB AS A HEADQUARTERS FOR  
HIS ONE-MAN WAR AGAINST  
CRIME AND CRIMINALS EVEN  
BEYOND THE LONG ARM OF  
THE LAW.. THEREFORE  
IT IS HARDLY SURPRIS-  
ING THAT DOLAN  
DOES NOT START,  
WHEN...



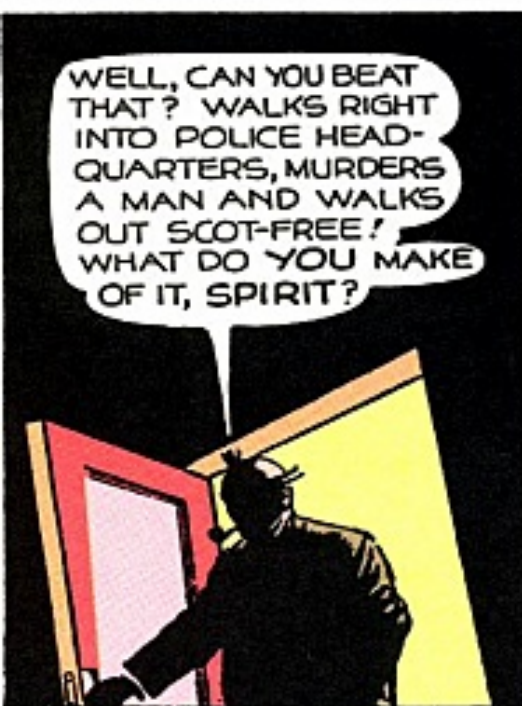
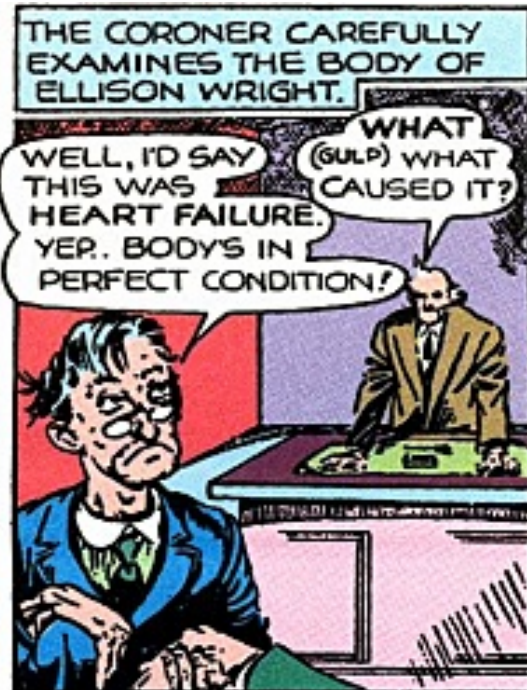
GOOD  
EVENING,  
DOLAN.

AND TO WHAT  
DO I OWE  
THIS VISIT??











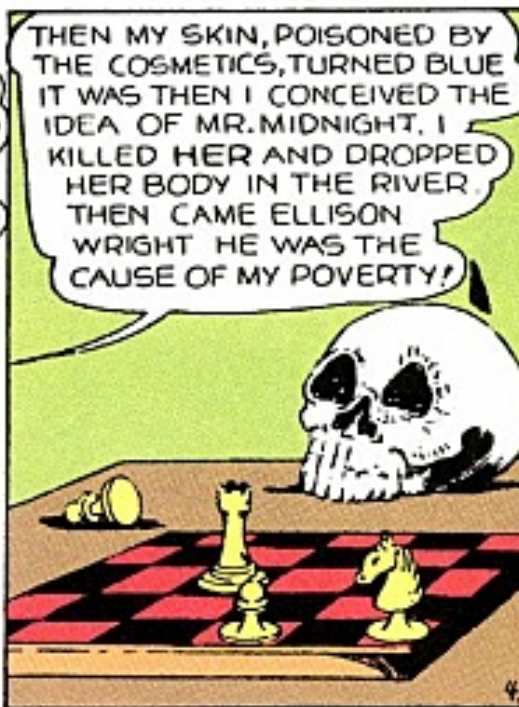
WITH THE DRAMA OF A RISING "LAST ACT" CURTAIN, DAWN PAINTS HESITATING STREAKS ACROSS THE NIGHT SKY, AS THE MOON RELUCTANTLY SEEKS REFUGE UNDER THE RETREATING NIGHT. ROARING UP THE NEGLECTED DRIVEWAY TO AN ANCIENT MANSION, MR. MIDNIGHT'S CAR COMES TO A SCREECHING HALT BEFORE THE PORCH . . .



UP DARK, WINDING STAIRS TO A HALF-LIT STUDY.



EASY, MR. JOHN CALIBAN, ALIAS MR. MIDNIGHT! EASY! AFTER I DISCOVERED THE TINY SCRATCH THAT DIDN'T BLEED. MUD ON YOUR SHOES. YOU SAID YOU CAME FROM THE COUNTRY AND I FOLLOWED YOU IN MY AUTOPLANE. GETTING IN







HORRIBLE, MIDNIGHT, YOU'RE NOTHING BUT AN ORDINARY KILLER! I'M TAKING YOU IN.

YORICK, DO YOU HEAR HIM? I'VE PLAYED EVERY ROLE, BUT NOW I PLAY MR. MIDNIGHT TO THE END!



AFTER ALL, I REALLY HAVEN'T COMMITTED A PERFECT CRIME IF YOU ARE ALIVE TO BEAR WITNESS.



THEN I'M TO GATHER, YOU WISH TO KILL ME, TOO?

YOU ARE QUICK TO GET THE IDEA.



NO MOVE!

YOU FORGET MY ONLY SERVANT BEPPO!

HA HA HA! AND THATS THAT!



AND YOU FORGET MY JIU JITSU, PAL!



OFF BALANCE, THE SPIRIT IS EASY PREY TO A HARD UPPERCUT..



WE'LL SET FIRE TO THIS PLACE, BEPPO.. HA-HAAA!



LAST ACT.. HA! MR. MIDNIGHT DEFEATS JUSTICE AND THE CURTAIN COMES DOWN IN A BLAZE OF GLORY...

THE SPIRIT!

YES, AND I'M CALLING FOR AN ENCORE!



FOR A LITTLE GUY,  
YOU SURE CAN  
SCRAP!



THE SPIRIT'S BACK IS TURNED..  
MR. MIDNIGHT IS QUICK TO SEIZE  
THE OPPORTUNITY. HE HURLS  
"YORICK" WITH TELLING EFFECT



LEAVING THE UNCONSCIOUS  
SPIRIT, THE TWO HURRY  
THROUGH THE CORRIDORS



FLAMING DEBRIS SHOWERS  
FROM ABOVE..AN INSTANT  
LATER THE ROOF COLLAPSES.



BACK SOMEWHERE IN  
THE FLAMES, THE SPIRIT  
RECOVERS HIS SENSES.



LIKE A BLAZING COMET, THE  
SPIRIT, HIS CLOTHES AFLAME,  
HURTLES DOWNWARD WITH  
INCREIBLE SPEED.



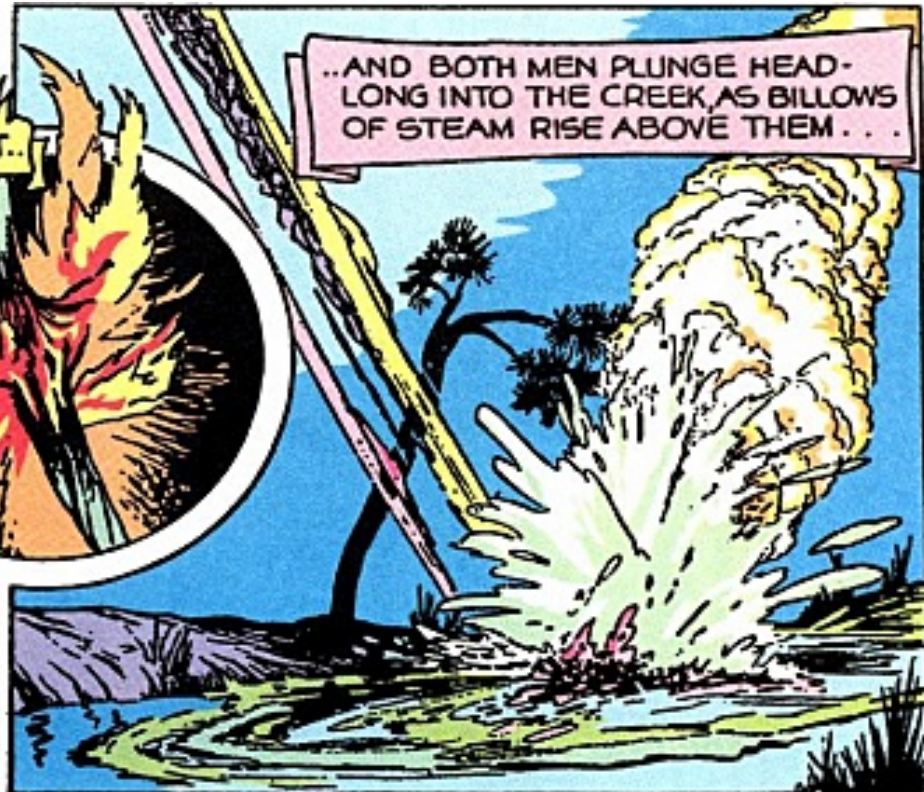




COME  
BACK  
HERE!

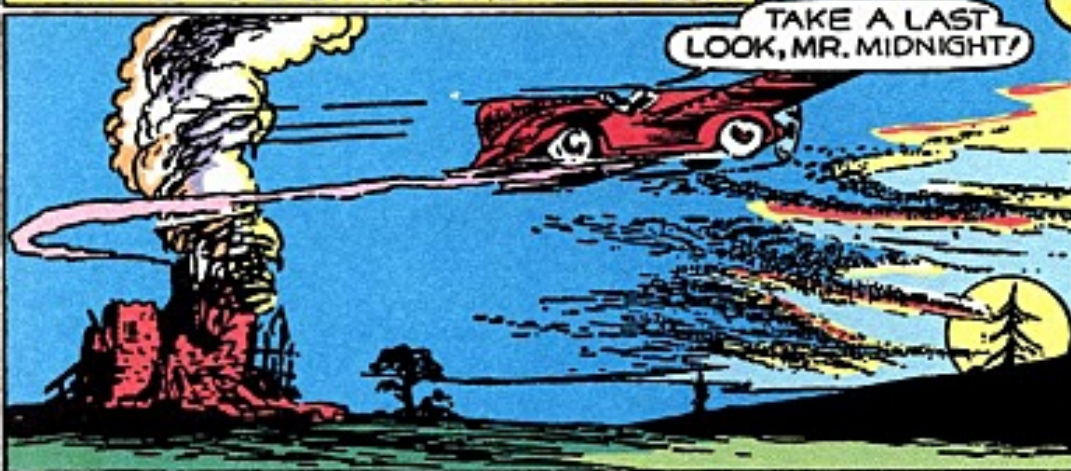


BUT..



..AND BOTH MEN PLUNGE HEAD-  
LONG INTO THE CREEK, AS BILLOWS  
OF STEAM RISE ABOVE THEM...

A FEW MINUTES LATER THE SPIRIT CIRCLES HIS AUTO-  
PLANE ONCE OVER THE SMOLDERING RUINS..AND  
THEN HEADS EAST INTO THE RISING SUN.



TAKE A LAST  
LOOK, MR. MIDNIGHT!

AT  
HEADQUARTERS  
ONCE MORE...

SO THAT'S  
WHY HE KEPT  
SHARPENING  
HIS NAILS!

YES, HIS NAILS  
WERE COATED  
WITH A POWERFUL  
POISON INDUCING  
HEART FAILURE. HE  
MERELY SCRATCHED  
ELLISON WHEN HE  
HANDED HIM THE  
PEN. THE POISON  
ACTS IN FIVE  
MINUTES!



YOU ARE VERY  
CLEVER, SPIRIT, BUT  
THE LAST SCENE  
IS MINE!

MR. MIDNIGHT DIGS  
A GASH IN HIS  
ARM WITH HIS  
POISONED FINGER-  
NAIL.



STOP! HEY!  
HE'S KILLED  
HIMSELF WITH  
HIS OWN  
DEVICE!



EXIT, MR.  
MIDNIGHT..  
ENTER JUSTICE  
TRIUMPHANT  
AS THE CURTAIN  
FALLS ON THE  
LAST ACT OF  
MURDER!

WELL, I'LL BE.  
THE CLOCK  
HAS STOPPED  
EXACTLY AT  
TWELVE!